

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 1 to 4 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the Information Disclosure Statement, PTO-1449 and cited references filed on November 24, 2004 return an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 with the next Office communication.

II. Rejection of Claims 1 to 4 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1 to 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,102,752 ("Bommel et al."). Applicants respectfully submit that Bommel et al. do not anticipate the present claims for the following reasons.

Claim 1 relates to an electrical connector in the form of a socket contact. Claim 1 recites that the electrical connector includes an inner contact part and a spring element adapted to be placed over the inner contact part. Claim 1 recites that the inner contact part includes an attachment part for receiving a bare end of an electrical line, a center segment, and a contact segment having a contact part. Claim 1 recites that the contact part has at least three contact lamellae pointing away from the center segment that are freely movable at their free ends. Claim 1 further recites that each of the contact lamellae have at least one contact point for producing an electrical plug connection to a knife blade. Claim 1 has been amended herein without prejudice to recite that the free ends of the contact lamellae are configured to spring off freely at a beginning of an introduction of a knife blade into the contact segment and to recite that the free ends are configured to come to rest against the spring element and the contact lamellae are configured to deform only after further insertion of the knife blade. Support for these amendments may be found, for example, at p. 3, lines 7 to 12 and lines 24 to 26 and p. 5, lines 4 to 9 of the Specification.

Bommel et al. purportedly relate to a two-part electrical socket contact. The socket contact is stated to include a contact body 2 and an outer cantilever spring 3. See col. 3, lines 66 to 67. The contact body 2 is stated to include a contact making section 4, which in turn is stated to be provided with two opposing contact springs 8 and 9. See col. 4, lines 11 to 12. In this regard, Bommel et al. state at col. 4, lines 11 to 12 that "[t]he contact making section 4 is provided with two opposing contact springs 8, 9" (emphasis added). Thus, the statement at p. 2 of the Final Office Action that Bommel et al. describe at least three contact

lamellae is apparently based on a misapprehension of the description by Bommel et al. Furthermore, the contention that Figures 13 to 15 and 20 of Bommel et al. "clearly show the inner contact part having at least the three contact lamellae and the features are disclosed in column 5, lines 6-17" is completely unsupported. Referring to Figures 13 to 15 and 20, at least three contact lamellae are not readily discernable. Any assertions to the contrary are apparently based on nothing more than pure speculation or conjecture. As regards, column 5, lines 6 to 17, Bommel et al. make no mention whatsoever of at least three contact lamellae. While Bommel et al. mention at column 5, lines 8 to 9 that the socket contact shown in Figures 13 to 23 "provides a different contact making section from the embodiments discussed so far," Bommel et al. does not in any manner describe that the "different contact making section" includes at least three contact lamellae. Any assertions to the contrary are also apparently based on nothing more than pure speculation or conjecture. As regards the contention that "the contact part with at least three contact lamellae are old and well known in the art," Applicants respectfully traverse and respectfully request that the Examiner provide published information to support these otherwise unsupported contentions or provide an affidavit under 37 C.F.R. § 1.104(d)(2) to support these otherwise unsupported contentions.

The embodiment of Figure 1 includes only two contact springs 8 and 9 and, therefore, does not include an inner contact part having at least three contact lamellae, as recited in claim 1. In the embodiment of Figure 13 the contact springs, shown in dashed lines, contact the outer spring 3 at their left side end. Therefore, Bommel et al. do not disclose, or even suggest, a device in which free ends of a contact lamellae are configured to spring off freely at a beginning of an introduction of a knife blade into a contact segment, and Bommel et al. do not disclose, or even suggest, a device in which free ends are configured to come to rest against a spring element and in which contact lamellae are configured to deform only after further insertion of a knife blade. As indicated above, Figure 13 apparently shows the ends of the contact springs contacting the spring element which would prevent them from springing off freely upon the beginning of introduction of a knife blade into the contact segment.

Due to the construction of the plug according to the present application, the insertion force of the knife blade may be small on account of the free ends of the contact lamellae being initially still capable of opening up so that the correct positioning of the plug connector on the mating plug connector may be detected. Only in the further course of the plug-on process do the free ends of the contact lamellae come to rest at the external retention spring and a significantly greater insertion force may result, which may then, however, be

overcome without doubt as to the positioning of the plug connector on the mating plug connector. This may achieve a high manufacturing stability at low manufacturing costs.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Bommel et al. do not disclose, or even suggest, all of the features recited in claim 1.

To anticipate a claim, each and every element as set forth in the claim must be found in a single prior art reference. Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of Calif., 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Furthermore, "[t]he identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim." Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 U.S.P.Q.2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). That is, the prior art must describe the elements arranged as required by the claims. In re Bond, 910 F.2d 831, 15 U.S.P.Q.2d 1566 (Fed. Cir. 1990). As more fully set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that Bommel et al. do not disclose, or even suggest, all of the features recited in amended claim 1. It is therefore respectfully submitted that Bommel et al. do not anticipate amended claim 1.

As for claims 2 to 4, which ultimately depend from claim 1 and therefore include all of the features recited in claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that Bommel et al. do not anticipate these dependent claims for at least the same reasons provided above in support of the patentability of claim 1.

In view of all of the foregoing, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

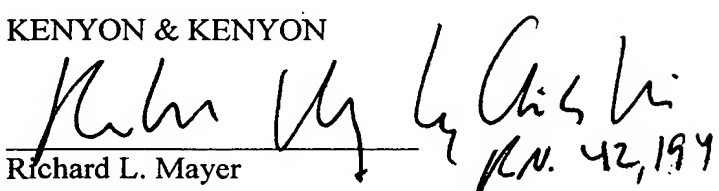
It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

KENYON & KENYON

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By:


Richard L. Mayer
Reg. No. 22,490
One Broadway
New York, New York 10004
(212) 425-7200
CUSTOMER NO. 26646